

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

Applicants have amended Claims 3, 4, 5, 9, 12, 19, 20, and 34. Applicants have cancelled Claims 1, 2, 17, 18, and 31-33, and the rejections of Claims 1, 2, 17, 18, and 31-33 are thus moot. In light of the following, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of pending Claims 3-16, 19-30, and 34-49.

DOUBLE PATENTING

Claims 6-8, 10, 11, and 13-16 stand rejected under the judicially-created doctrine of obviousness-type double patenting as being unpatentable over the claims of any one of U.S. Patent Nos. 6,487,446 and 6,690,973. Applicants have submitted herewith a terminal disclaimer in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §1.321(a). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request removal of the double-patenting rejection.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants appreciate the indication of allowable subject matter in Claims 3-5, 9, 12, 19, 20, 34, and 35. Applicants have amended Claims 3, 4, 5, 9, 12, 19, 20, and 34 into independent form by incorporating the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants also appreciate the allowance of Claims 21-30 and 36-49.

App. Serial No. 10/716,810
Response to July 11, 2005 Office Action
Amendment dated January 11, 2006
Attorney Docket No. 065071-9057

CONCLUSION

In light of the above, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of pending Claims 3-16, 19-30, and 34-49.

Respectfully submitted,



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